

# Educating Captains For War: Deliberately Designing Professional Military Education

A Monograph

by

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## **Abstract**

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This monograph focuses on the recently established School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics' (SALT) development of Captains' Career Course (CCC) Curricula. Many researchers and scholars have written on the subject of education and offered insights on how to improve curricula based on various research methods. However, unlike previous monographs and theses, the focus of this monograph is less on the curricula and more on how the curricula were developed. Did the SALT deliberately and sufficiently develop current CCC curricula to enable captains to meet the demands of complex operating environments? By providing historical context on the development of Professional Military Education (PME) for captains and examining the process the SALT underwent to design current CCC curricula, this monograph argues that the SALT used a deliberate design process and has significantly improved the quality and efficacy of captains' PME in preparing them to meet the demands of complex operating environments.

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## **Acronyms**

ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
ALA	Army Learning Assessment
ALC	Army Learning Concept
ALCC	Army Learning Coordination Council
ALDS	Army Leader Development Strategy
ALM	Army Learning Model
AR	Army Regulation
BOC	Basic Officers' Course
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CAS3	Combined Arms Services Staff School
CASAL	Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership
CCC	Captains' Career Course
CFL	Core Function Lead
CGSOC	Command and General Staff Officer Course
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CGSS	Command and General Staff School
CoE	Center of Excellence
DL	Distance Learning
FDP	Faculty Development Program
FSO	Full Spectrum Operations
GLO	General Learning Objectives
HRC	Human Resources Command
IAE	Initial Assessment Exercise
ILE	Intermediate Level Education
IMT	Initial Military Training



JIIM	Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational
MDMP	Military Decision Making Process
MLC	Mid-Grade Learning Continuum
OAC	Officer Advanced Course
OSD	Officer Self Development
PAT	Process Action Team
PDOS	Professional Development of Officers Study
PME	Professional Military Education
RETO	Review of Education and Training of Officers
SCP	Soldier Competency Panel
SGL	Small Group Leader
STAFFEX	Staff Exercise
TDA	Temporary Duty Assignment
TLP	Troop Leading Procedures
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command

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## Introduction

There is not a discovery in science, however revolutionary, however sparkling with insight, that does not arise out of what went before. 'If I have seen further than other men,' said Isaac Newton, 'it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants.'

— Isaac Asimov, *Adding a Dimension*

As attested by the numerous studies focused on Professional Military Education (PME) throughout the years since its inception, the US Army has long been interested in educating its officers to meet the demands of war. A decade of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, without a decisive victory, spurred the most recent bout of introspection. Following the 2010 Captains' Career Course (CCC) Study, TRADOC established the School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics (SALT) to provide oversight and governance of all mid-grade officer education from Officer Basic Course (OBC) through the CCC. CCC, in particular, remains a critical component of a company grade officer's growth, though not considered a transitional period for captains between tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war.<sup>1</sup> SALT carries a heavy responsibility in ensuring that CCC's design not only adequately prepares company grade officers for company command and service on battalion and brigade staffs, but also ensures they are ready to transition to the field grade level of their careers.

Prior to the 2010 CCC Study, the US Army conducted eleven separate studies spanning the course of the past seventy years.<sup>2</sup> In general, these studies found that training was consistently emphasized over education to the detriment of captains. Most also concluded that captains would be better served with reflection on their experiences in a challenging academic settings where

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<sup>1</sup> Keith R. Beurskens, Steven M. Carmichael, and William M. Raymond, Jr., "The Criticality of Captains' Education: Now and in the Future," *Military Review*, no.6 (November-December 2010): 52.

<sup>2</sup> The eleven studies were the Gerow Board (1946), Eddy Board (1949), Williams Board (1958), Daily Board (1961), Haines Board (1966), Norris Review (1971), Harrison Board (also called the Review of Education and Training for Officers, 1978), Professional Development of Officers Study (1985), Officer Personnel Management System XXI Study (1999), Army Training and Leader Development Panel (2002), and Leader Development and Education Task Force (2003).

they could engage in dialogue with their peers.<sup>3</sup> The 2010 CCC Study was no different in its general findings and recommendations. However, the US Army's approach to implementing the 2010 CCC Study's recommendations may have done more to shift captains' PME towards education than previous attempts since World War II.

An examination of how the SALT, as the organization responsible for CCC curricula, went about implementing change will help determine if captains' PME has significantly shifted towards education instead of training. Did the SALT deliberately design the current curricula? Or did it accidentally stumble upon the curricula currently in the final stages of testing? If the SALT did deliberately design the curricula, what method did it employ and was it effective? This monograph attempts to answer these questions to provide evidence that the SALT not only deliberately designed the current CCC curricula in the final stages of testing, but that it did so in a way that improved captains' education.

## Methodology

Assuming war remains a complex human endeavor, this paper will examine history, theory, and doctrine to understand if the current CCC has been deliberately designed to provide the right education, at the right time, and in the right learning environment for career officers. Drawing on history from primary and secondary sources to investigate the evolution of CCC over the past seventy years will provide context for examining the current process the US Army is undertaking to develop PME.<sup>4</sup> The Army Design Methodology (ADM) as presented in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Operations Process*, will provide a mental frame within which to deduce whether or not current CCC curricula development within TRADOC follows a deliberate design methodology.

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<sup>3</sup> Beurskens, Carmichael, and Raymond, "Criticality of Captains' Education," 52.

<sup>4</sup> Primary research includes two interviews with subject matter experts from the US Army Combined Arms Center. Informed consent was received for each interview (see Appendix A).

## The Army Design Methodology

Because “[c]omplexity manifests itself in everything from individual relationships to corporate challenges to concerns about the human condition and global welfare,” it follows that designing curricula to produce officers with the attributes required to operate in complex operational environments requires a design methodology focused on finding solutions for unfamiliar problems.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately various design models and definitions make defining design problematic. As design theorist Bryan Lawson points out; it is “given quite specific and different meanings by particular groups of people.”<sup>6</sup> To avoid confusion, this monograph uses the ADM as the design framework to evaluate and assess current CCC curricula development. Using the ADM as the framework to evaluate how well the US Army developed current CCC curricula necessitates an explanation of ADM’s key aspects and activities as presented in ADRP 5-0.

Chapter two in ADRP 5-0 presents the ADM as the planning methodology that aids in conceptual planning.<sup>7</sup> The key concepts underlying the ADM include, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, dialogue, framing, narrative construction, and visual modeling.<sup>8</sup> Critical thinking is purposeful and reflective in nature and helps planners evaluate and respond to “observations, experience, verbal or written expressions, or arguments.”<sup>9</sup> Creative thinking concerns the ability of planners to create new or original insights, approaches, perspectives, or ways to understand the operational environment. Commanders enable critical and creative thinking by creating a learning environment where planners can collaborate and participate in

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<sup>5</sup> Yaneer Bar-Yam, *Making Things Work: Solving Problems in a Complex World* (Cambridge: New England Complex Systems Institute, 2004), 13.

<sup>6</sup> Bryan Lawson, *How Designers Think: The Design Process Demystified* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2006), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 2-5.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 1-10.

dialogue to “share their ideas, opinions, and recommendations without fear of retribution.”<sup>10</sup>

Planners use critical and creative thinking, dialogue, and collaboration to deliberately frame the operational environment. The central activity in ADM, *framing*, “involves selecting, organizing, interpreting, and making sense of an operational environment and a problem by establishing context.”<sup>11</sup> Narrative construction – engaging in producing a story – critically aids framing. The act of constructing narratives bounds events in time and space to give them meaning and improves shared understanding of the operational environment, the problem, and potential solutions. Visual modeling enhances creativity and, combined with a narrative, furthers understanding.<sup>12</sup>

The general activities commanders and planners engage in when using the ADM center on framing the operational environment, the problem, and the operational approach. Commanders and planners engage in this process iteratively throughout planning and execution. As realities emerge during planning and execution, commanders and planners may find themselves having to reframe and adapt to changing circumstances.<sup>13</sup>

When framing the operational environment, planners frame both the current environment and the desired environment. To do so, they focus on defining and finding the relationships between the different operational and mission variables that can help or hinder mission success for operational environment’s current state and desired state. This establishes context for

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<sup>10</sup> ADRP 5-0, 1-10 – 1-11. ADRP 5-0 discusses critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and dialogue in its first chapter separate from ADM.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 2-5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 2-5. ADRP 5-0 discusses framing, narrative construction, and visual modeling in chapter 2.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 2-6.

describing the problem and developing an operational approach and provides commanders with a lens for understanding and acting on a problem.<sup>14</sup>

Once planners have framed the operational environment, they examine the current and desired states to identify those obstacles that impede achieving desired goals or objectives. By identifying and understanding the issues that hinder progress, they frame the problem. Based on the problem frame, planners then develop a problem statement to form a narrative on the issues requiring resolution to achieve the desired endstate.<sup>15</sup> This allows commanders and planners to then frame an operational approach. According to ADRP 5-0, when framing the operational approach, commanders and planners consider the broad general actions needed to overcome problems and achieve the desired end state.<sup>16</sup> The operational approach then serves to “inform detailed planning and guides the force through preparation and execution.”<sup>17</sup>

While the ADM is portrayed as commander centric in ADRP 5-0, it provides a useful framework for depicting the process TRADOC underwent in developed the current CCC curricula. Depicting when and where different groups responsible for the current curricula used creative and critical thinking, collaboration and dialogue, framing, narrative construction, and visual modeling should provide ample evidence that the US Army has deliberately designed the current curricula to produce officers prepared to operate in complex environments.

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<sup>14</sup> ADRP 5-0, 2-6 – 2-8.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 2-9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 2-11. Commanders can and should reframe if realities on the ground do not match understanding during planning. Examples of when reframing is appropriate include: assessment reveals a lack of progress; key assumptions prove invalid; unanticipated success or failure; a major event that causes “catastrophic change” in the operational environment; a scheduled periodic review that shows a problem; and a change in mission or end state issued by higher authority.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 2-10.

## **US Army PME Design: Literary Review**

Since the inception of the Advanced Course for captains, Army PME proponents and students of military art have written prolifically on how to best educate the US Army's captains. Though the Combined Arms Center (CAC) is currently engaged in evolving and improving PME for all officer ranks, one significant gap in knowledge exists: an understanding of the methodology the US Army used to develop its current CCC curricula. This gap in knowledge merits closer analysis to improve future PME studies by providing a shared understanding of how current educational doctrine and curricula came into existence.

A cursory search of previous School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) monographs for the term "Professional Military Education" produces over 1000 search results. Refining the search to only those monographs concerning CCC at some level produces 144 monographs written on the topic since the US Army established SAMS in 1986. Clearly, officers' education is a consistently popular research topic for SAMS students.

Beyond SAMS monographs or other research papers, officer education holds the rapt interest of many others who write in academic journals. Articles concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of officer education in the face of the type of conflict the military has continuously engaged in over the past fifteen years abound. However, most of the writing coalesces around a common theme: current officer PME curricula insufficiently develop leaders to operate in complex environments and needs to be ameliorated to some degree. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find anything that actually examines the methods the US Army employed in designing its PME curricula.

In 2002, Major Joseph McLamb, while pursuing a Master of Military Art and Science degree at the Command and General Staff School (CGSS), wrote a thesis that used fourteen evaluation criteria to measure the degree to which thirteen training methods used in three CCCs aligned with the principles of adult learning. While he studied the three curricula in detail and found that CCC curricula at the time was insufficiently grounded in adult learning theories,



McLamb did not examine how the US Army developed it.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Major Matthew McKinley, in his SAMS monograph “An Assessment of the Army Officer Education System from an Adult Learning Perspective,” disregarded how the US Army developed its curricula when he used an adult learning model to assess officer PME spanning from initial entry through Intermediate Level Education.<sup>19</sup> These two papers exemplify research intended to improve curricula without examining the process through which curricula was developed.

Other research pertaining to officer PME tends to stress the importance of it. For example, in 2004, Lieutenant Colonel Kelly Jordan wrote a paper for the Association of the US Army Institute of Land Warfare that described the evolution of PME for captains since 1776. In it, he emphasized the growing importance of balancing of mid grade officer education with training and argued that PME needed to be more educationally based.<sup>20</sup> In 2010, Colonel William Raymond, Lieutenant Colonels Keith Beurskens, and Steven Carmichael wrote on the criticality of captains’ education following an intensive CCC study in 2010. Describing the key findings and recommendations from the CCC study, they, like Jordan, argued that education is “the most important pillar of the Army Leader Development Strategy, since education allows one to gain better understanding of experiences and training.”<sup>21</sup> Again, as with most works on officer PME, left out was a discussion of how the US Army developed CCC curricula, as it existed then.

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph S. McLamb, “Killer Captains: Producing Company Commanders Who Win Tactical Engagements” (master’s thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, 2002), accessed June 29, 2014, CARL Digital Library, Abstract.

<sup>19</sup> Matthew R. McKinley, “An Assessment of the Army Officer Education System from an Adult Learning Perspective” (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, 2004), accessed June 28, 2014, CARL Digital Library.

<sup>20</sup> Kelley C. Jordan, “The Yin and Yang of Junior Officer Learning: The Historical Development of the Army’s Institutional Education Program for Captains.” (Land Warfare Paper No. 49, The Association of the United States Army, 2004), accessed June 29, 2014, CARL Digital Library, v.

<sup>21</sup> Beurskens, Carmichael, and Raymond, “Criticality of Captains’ Education,” 57.

In 2011, Major Peter Sittenauer, who was also a team member in the 2010 CCC Study, wrote an Master of Military Art and Science thesis that is perhaps the closest example of research into the actual curricula design process. At the time, the SALT was in the process of developing the current captains' education model, the Mid Grade Learning Continuum (MLC) 2015. Understandably, as the SALT was mid process, Sittenauer did not explore the design process it employed to develop the MLC 2015. Instead, he compared and contrasted the captains' educational model of the United Kingdom to the MLC 2015. Based on his findings, he made nine specific recommendations to the SALT, the CAC, and TRADOC to aid in MLC 2015's development.<sup>22</sup>

None of these examples should be taken as a condemnation of previous written works on officer PME. On the contrary, these works attest to the high level of thought and research that many great minds have produced over the years with regard to PME. However, they also serve to highlight that, while many have written and continue to write well concerning PME, a gap in knowledge exists linking the US Army's approach to education and its actual curricula production. This monograph strives to fill that gap.

### **The Evolution of US Army Captains' Education: History**

PME's main purpose is to contribute to the preparation of the US military's officers as they progress through their careers for leadership at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.<sup>23</sup> However, until after World War II, PME for captains had always been incidental rather

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<sup>22</sup> Peter M. Sittenauer, "The UK Army Officers' Experience with the ROCC Model and its Implications for Captains Education in the US Army" (master's thesis US Army Command and General Staff College, 2011), Abstract.

<sup>23</sup> House Armed Services Committee, "Investing in our Military Leaders: The Role of Professional Military Education in Officer Development," (hearing before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, First Session Washington DC, June 28, 2009), accessed June 30, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 1.

than systematic.<sup>24</sup> Shortly after the war, the US Army created branch specific Advanced Courses for captains to provide a structure for formal junior officer education. Since then, there have been twelve independent studies focused on formal captains' education. The singular prevalent and underlying theme to each study was that captains received more than enough training but not enough education.<sup>25</sup> Though each successive board made recommendations to improve captains' PME and the US Army implemented many of those changes, the latest study conducted in 2010 indicates that the US Army has yet to find the right balance between education and training in the classroom.

#### Gerow Board

The Gerow Board, also known as the War Department Education Board on Educational Systems for Officers of the Army and headed by then commandant of the CGSS, Lieutenant General Leonard Gerow, convened in 1945 to outline the curriculum for all officers in academic years 1946-1947.<sup>26</sup> Though primarily focused on field grade officer education, the board did recognize the need for basic and advanced courses for company grade officers due to an "admitted deficiency in the training of small unit commanders during" World War II.<sup>27</sup> The board argued against a branch immaterial advanced course. It assumed that captains lacked the experience to maximize the benefits of junior officer interaction.<sup>28</sup> Instead they argued that branch specific advanced schools would better serve junior officers with the technical knowledge

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<sup>24</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 2-5.

<sup>25</sup> Beurskens, Carmichael, and Raymond, "Criticality of Captains' Education," 52.

<sup>26</sup> War Department Military Education Board, "Report of War Department Military Education Board on Educational System for Officers of the Army" (Professional Military Education study, US Army, 1945, hereafter cited as Gerow Board), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 1.

<sup>27</sup> Gerow Board, 51.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 52.

required to lead their company-sized formations. Thus the infantry, armor, artillery, and cavalry Officer Advanced Courses (OAC) were born.<sup>29</sup> In addition, the board stressed that “actual training and experience on the job” should supplement the advanced course.<sup>30</sup>

#### Eddy Board

Unfortunately, though it established basic and advanced courses for junior officers, the Gerow Board failed to specify a professional timeline for regular army officers to attend the course.<sup>31</sup> In 1949, the Eddy Board, led by Gerow’s successor at CGSS, Lieutenant General Manton Eddy, focused more on junior officer education and generally agreed with the findings of the Gerow board. The board’s major impact on junior officer education was in its recommendation – and the US Army’s subsequent implementation – to establish three levels of junior officer education tied to a time in service requirement.

In place of the basic officer course, an officer would attend a branch orientation course lasting from four to twelve weeks upon commission. After two to five years of service with troops, a combat arms officer would then attend a branch company officers’ course of no more than eleven months intended to prepare him for company and battalion level duty. The experience prerequisite for an officer to attend the branch specific OAC in preparation for duty as a junior

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<sup>29</sup> Gerow Board, 53. At the time of the board, the Air Force did not exist as an organization independent of the Army. Hence the language in the board’s findings and recommendations separating air schools from ground schools. The limited value of ground operation knowledge to an Army Air Corps officer (the US Army Air Forces was not transformed into the US Air Force until 1947) was also a key factor in arguing against branch immaterial schooling. Additionally, throughout its history, the OAC has been referred to as the “Advanced Course,” the “Officers’ Advanced Course,” and the “Advanced Officers’ Course”. For the purposes of this paper, all three will be referred to as the “OAC”.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>31</sup> Jordan, “Yin and Yang,” 6.

officer in up to a division level general staff was five to twelve years of service.<sup>32</sup> While these changes further standardized officer education, the board's findings and recommendations did not promote the idea that any of these courses were an essential requirement for taking command of troops at the company level.

#### Williams Board

In 1958, the US Army appointed Lieutenant General Edward Williams to head another educational review board. Incorporating ten other senior officers and granted unprecedented resources, the Williams Board's educational review was the most comprehensive to date.<sup>33</sup> Visiting twenty-five branch specific schools, the US Army War College (USAWC), and the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), the board's findings and recommendations generally impacted officer education by making the first attempt to delineate education from training.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, the Williams Board specifically changed the nature of captains' courses by consolidating the eleven month branch company officers' course and the OAC.

The Williams Board defined education as "Individual military instruction provided by schools...given without regard to the student's job assignment or membership in a unit."<sup>35</sup> Education, in other words, was branch immaterial. Conversely, training was defined as individual and unit training instruction that was branch and unit specific.<sup>36</sup> Education was "formal

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<sup>32</sup> Department of the Army Board "Report of the Department of the Army Board on Educational System for Officers" (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 1949, hereafter cited as Eddy Board), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 31.

<sup>33</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 8.

<sup>34</sup> Department of the Army Education and Training Review Board. "Report of the Department of the Army Officer and Training Review Board" (Professional Military Education Study Report, US Army, 1958, hereafter cited as Williams Board), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 77-9.

<sup>35</sup> Williams Board, 124.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 124.

instruction and study leading to intellectual development to include the making of sound decisions,” whereas training implied both “instruction and supervised practice toward acquisition of a skill.”<sup>37</sup> These definitions framed how the Army viewed the terms giving the Williams Board and subsequent review boards a basis for recommending more education over training.

The Williams Board, building on the Eddy Board’s recommendations, also led to the collapsing of the two separate captains’ courses into one year long course. The board believed that one year was sufficient time to provide captains with branch instruction to conduct duties through the battalion level while improving captains’ education.<sup>38</sup> Consolidating captains’ education would “avoid duplication of instruction, “permit the school to improve instruction by concentrating its resources on a single course,” and “reduce expenditure of personnel and finances for the school system.”<sup>39</sup> It would also “provide for lengthier onetime student assignments and increased stability of troop duty assignments,” and “establish a better balance between formal schooling and practical experience, individual study, and troop schools in the overall development of the officer.”<sup>40</sup> That the CCC today reflects this structure with the addition of a branch immaterial common core focused on education, as the Williams Board defined it, underscores the importance of this board.

#### Dailey Board

In 1961, budget reductions caused Under Secretary of the Army, Stephen Ailes, to direct another review of officer education intended to maximize education efficiency.<sup>41</sup> Chaired by

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<sup>37</sup> Williams Board, 125.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 24-5.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 23

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 24-5.

<sup>41</sup> United States Army Continental Command, “The Army School System, Report of a Board of Officers” (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 1961, hereafter cited

Lieutenant General J. P. Dailey and comprised of seventeen other senior officers, the Dailey Board came to several conclusions after a review of the Navy and Air Force school systems. First, the school system should be more physically and hierarchically centralized to maximize standardization and reduce duplication. Second, temporary duty schools, where possible, should be linked to permanent changes of station. Lastly, the Dailey Board recognized that the US Army school system had an issue of instructor quality because the system lacked a standardized set of criteria for duty as an instructor.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately, the allocation of resources to the growing conflict in Vietnam constrained the ability for the US Army to implement any of the board's recommendations.

#### Haines Board

Convened in 1965 and chaired by Lieutenant General Ralph Haines, Jr., the Haines board studied the executive and managerial school systems of eight large industrial corporations in addition to other American and foreign military service school systems and visited over 70 military installations.<sup>43</sup> Commissioned to "[d]etermine the adequacy and appropriateness of the present system for education and training of Army officers at service schools, service colleges, and civilian institutions for the period 1965-1975," the board's research overwhelmingly focused on the Infantry OAC, but its findings applied to other branch career courses as well.

An excerpt from a letter that General Paul Adams wrote to the Haines Board succinctly captures the key shortcomings that the board found in the career course:

The current curricula...parallel very closely those which obtained prior to World War II. They have not advanced abreast of the times...there is a tendency to resist injection into the curricula subjects of courses...that are not purely military but which are needed in order to train officers for the wide variety of tasks and assignments they will be called

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as Dailey Board), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 1-2 to 1-4; and Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 9.

<sup>42</sup> Dailey Board, 2-11.

<sup>43</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 9-10.

upon to fill...Another point...is the lack of depth or substance in what is taught in the schools...too much attention to technicalities, and too little to principles...I...believe students...do not have to be spoon-fed, as is the case with so much instruction at this time.<sup>44</sup>

Echoing the Williams Board, General Adams and the Haines Board identified that OACs in general focused too much on training and not enough on education.<sup>45</sup> In response to its findings, the board recommended renaming the career course as the advanced course and a curricula revision for each career course for Regular Army and Reserve officers. The recommended curricula placed more emphasis on electives to make it more adaptive and applicable to officers. It also proposed a change in the course's stated objective to "prepare officers for command and staff duties at battalion through brigade or comparable levels in both divisional and non-divisional units."<sup>46</sup> As with the Daley Board's recommendations, the Army would slowly implement the Haines Board's recommendations as resources became available.<sup>47</sup>

#### Norris Review

In 1970, Army Chief of Staff General William Westmoreland commissioned a new study of US Army education under Major General Frank Norris. This study, unlike the Haines Board expanded beyond the captains' advanced course to include all levels of PME from the basic course through the Army War College. Considering the OAC within the context of nine perceived factors present in the 1970s, the Norris Board found that the course primarily failed to prepare

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<sup>44</sup> Department of the Army Board, "Report of the Department of the Army Board to Review Army officer Schools: Volume V" (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 1966, hereafter cited as Haines Board), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 449.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 443.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 443.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., "Vol. I," 1.



officers for duty as company commanders.<sup>48</sup> This was because, though the Basic Course correctly focused on duties a newly commissioned officer would perform at the platoon level and the Advanced Course correctly focused on command and staff through the brigade level, neither course covered the company level sufficiently.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the board found that the diversity in officer education levels throughout each of the eighteen OACs meant that a Rhodes Scholar and an officer with a tenth grade education could sit side by side in the same classroom.<sup>50</sup> One would be underwhelmed while the other was overly challenged. Lastly, in light of the social and educational context of the 1970s, the Norris Board expressed worries that insufficient education at the Advanced Course would lead to further losses of the US Army's best and brightest at the company level.<sup>51</sup>

In light of these findings, the Norris Board echoed the previous boards for a need to balance education and training in the OACs, prescribing a one-to-one ratio on education and training for captains attending the course.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the board, like the Haines Board, reiterated the need to introduce electives into OACs to further tailor the course to individual

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<sup>48</sup> Department of the US Army, "Review of Army Officer Educational System: Volumes I-III; Summary Report" (Professional Military Education Study Report, US Army, 1971, hereafter cited as Norris Review), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, 2-1 & 3-2. The perceived factors were: increased threat, reduced resources; continued domestic antimilitarism; implications of the Nixon Doctrine; continued sociological revolution; continued technological advance; increased specialization; an education explosion; an undereducated hump of officers without baccalaureate degrees due to increased manpower requirements for the Vietnam conflict; and a need for fighting ability.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 3-2 – 3-3. In contrast, the CGSC focused "primarily on the command and operational aspects of the Army in the field."

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 5-1. The Norris Review cites this as an extreme example of educational disparity within CCCs.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 5-2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 14-13. The language used to describe education in the Norris Board Report was "student centered learning" and training was described as "instructor centered learning."

student educational needs.<sup>53</sup> To address preparation for company command while keeping in mind that, within the existing OACs, “a welcome variety of approaches, attitudes, and techniques exists; so any comments, guidance, and recommendations about such a heterogeneous group can be inaccurate or inappropriate for some schools” the board recommended an expansion of the mission statement for all branches.<sup>54</sup> The proposed expansion included words indicating that each school would “provide a foundation for continuing education and further professional development.”<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, Norris made one new recommendation concerning the OACs’ nature in relation to officer retention. He states in the Norris Review’s findings that the advanced course should “assure that the student has a full, rewarding, and ‘happy’ year.”<sup>56</sup> Not for the last time, the US Army recognized the importance of both educating and retaining its junior officers beyond their service requirements.

#### Review of Education and Training of Officers Study

Following a detailed study of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the US Army made revisions to PME curricula that, to the detriment of subjects traditionally related to officer development and education, emphasized technical competence in weapon system employment.<sup>57</sup> By 1977, US Army leaders generally agreed that the curricula across the spectrum of PME was not yet producing officers with the desired level of military competency.”<sup>58</sup> Further complicating matters

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<sup>53</sup> Norris Review, 14-13.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 5-1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 5-4 – 5-5.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 5-4. Emphasis in the original document.

<sup>57</sup> A Study Group For the Review of Education and Training for Officers, “Review of Training and Education for Officers (RETO): Volume I” (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 1978, hereafter cited as RETO), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, Vol. 1, v.

<sup>58</sup> RETO, Vol. 1, v.

was the Office of Management and Budget's assertion that officer education and training drained limited resources and should be reduced by seventy five percent.<sup>59</sup> For these reasons, then Army Chief of Staff General Bernard Rogers commissioned the Review of Education and Training of Officers (RETO) Study in 1977.

With a study team of about forty officers from the rank of first lieutenant to major general, input from at least ten general officers, several hundred officers involved in analysis, and over 14,000 survey respondents, the RETO Study sought to do what no previous study had yet done: draw their recommendations from hard quantitative support.<sup>60</sup> Using a methodology reminiscent of most scientific studies at the time, the study defined the problem; researched and collected data; reduced and analyzed data; formulated and tested hypotheses, concepts, and/or alternatives; and terminated the study with findings and recommendations.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps the most influential study since the William's Board in terms of captains' PME, the RETO Study made many recommendations.<sup>62</sup> The most enduring of its recommendations was to create the Combined Arms and Services Staff School (CAS3) at Fort Leavenworth as a part of the CGSC. Noting that the OAC was too early to train officers "in skills they must use throughout most of the rest of their careers," and recognizing that all officers need some staff training, the RETO study recommended the creation of the CAS3 under the CGSC to provide all new majors with the requisite training to serve on staffs.<sup>63</sup> Once implemented, the course endured as a part of PME through the first few years of the twenty first century.

More radically and interestingly, the study also recommended getting rid of the OAC altogether. Its authors argued that the reduction of the course from thirty five to twenty six weeks

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<sup>59</sup> RETO, Vol. I, v.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., I-8 and II-1.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., II-1.

<sup>62</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 12.

<sup>63</sup> RETO, Vol. 1, VI-5 and V-9.

significantly reduced the benefits for officers to “reflect on their military experience and to exchange ideas with their contemporaries” and spend time with their families.<sup>64</sup> In addition, the study argued that officers staying in units longer would allow them to develop closer relationships with leaders, peers, and subordinates and compensate for any perceived benefits lost.

Thus, the RETO Study argued, splitting the OAC curriculum four ways to the Basic Officer Course (BOC), the CAS3, company command courses, and on-the-job training would better prepare officers for the challenge of serving in the future.<sup>65</sup> Though the US Army kept the OAC, this particular recommendation helped spur intellectual debate within the US the Army on the appropriate nature of officer education curriculum, location, timing, and forum throughout the 1980s.<sup>66</sup>

#### Professional Development of Officers Study

In May 1984, Chief of Staff of the Army, General John Wickham, Jr., tasked Lieutenant General Charles Bagnal to lead the next PME study. The Professional Development of Officer’s Study (PDOS) reviewed “all aspects of the officer professional development system as it has evolved since the 1978 RETO study,” and projected “the applicability of that system and its recommendations out to 2025.”<sup>67</sup> Concluding that the education system of the time did not require an overhaul, the study still made several key recommendations that changed how the US Army continued to implement the RETO Study’s recommendations.

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<sup>64</sup> RETO, Vol. 2, D-10-4 and 5.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., D-10-5.

<sup>66</sup> Jordan, “Yin and Yang,” 14.

<sup>67</sup> A Study Group for the Chief of Staff, Army, “Professional Development of Officers Study: Volume I” (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 1985, hereafter cited as PDOS), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, III.

Echoing previous boards, the PDOS again found that officers still spent about 80 percent of their post-commissioning resident schooling focused on training over education.<sup>68</sup> As requirements increased for officers to maintain perishable skills brought by continuing technological advances in the 1980s, the PDOS understood the difficulties that a shifting back to education would face.<sup>69</sup> To enable this shift, the study used an Adult Learning Cycle as a model for junior officer education.<sup>70</sup> The Adult Learning Cycle described by the PDOS consists of: gaining knowledge in schools, units or organizations; using gained knowledge to develop theories based on experience and feedback on the job; and using further experience and feedback to refine theories learn higher order concepts. The PDOS relates this continuing cycle to officers continually refine their mental frameworks and contexts as they relate to successive jobs and promotion.<sup>71</sup> This led to it identifying three key transition points that the junior officer PME should capitalize on to train and educate: commissioning, promotion to captain, and promotion to major.<sup>72</sup>

Another key recommendation the PDOS made to enhance education concerned the forum for OACs and the role of instructors. Stating that “[c]aptains learn from their experiences, whether in service schools, on field exercises or from simulations of challenging situations,” the PDOS maintained that small group instruction was the best way to develop leaders, allow captains to best interact with their peers, and assess captains individually.<sup>73</sup> This method would become the norm for both CAS3 and the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC)

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<sup>68</sup> PDOS, Vol. I, 41.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 61; and Jordan, “Yin and Yang,” 14. Jordan explains that, while USACGSOC had been using small-group instructional methodology in some of its classes since 1956, a 1987 decision following the PDOS required CGSOC to adopt it across the entire college.

as run by the CGSC. For the small group method to work, the study – in light of the poor quality of instructors it found educating junior officers – argued that instructors could no longer just be “an information conduit” or a subject matter expert.<sup>74</sup> He would also have to possess the maturity and experience to serve as a mentor and role model that guided students towards a “comprehensive understanding of the context in which their future duties are to be performed.”<sup>75</sup>

Finally, unlike the RETO Study, the PDOS saw captains coming out of the Advanced Course as the primary audience for the CAS3. As the CAS3 course brought all students to an equal level in terms of common staff processes” and research at the time showed “when and where officers serve on combined arms and TDA [Temporary Duty Assignment] staffs,” Captains needed to complete the course no later than their eighth year of service.<sup>76</sup> The PDOS argued that captains would then be able to gain the correct mental reference framework required to serve their first tour on a combined arms staff. The changes brought on by the study’s recommendations produced high caliber junior officers that impressed gaining commanders.

#### CCC Evolution from 1990 to 2010

The OAC officially became the first part of the CCC following the TRADOC Reengineering Study in 1993. The military drawdown following the 1991 Gulf War strained the education system ability to produce educated junior officers. Then TRADOC Commanding General Frederick Franks tasked one of several Process Action Teams (PATs) to review education and training in light of fiscal and manpower constraints. This PAT consisted of five

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<sup>74</sup> PDOS, Vol. I, 52.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 60.

officers and one civilian and made recommendations that would lead to a four-phased transformation of captains' education.<sup>77</sup>

Phase I simply recognized the importance of the OAC and the CAS3 and that they were two parts of the whole captains' education experience. Phase II established the CCC as a three part course. Captains completed the advanced course, consisting of a common core followed by branch specific training, then moved on to the CAS3 at Fort Leavenworth for the final portion. Phase III reduced the length of the OAC portion from twenty to eighteen weeks. Phase IV implemented a two-week distance learning course followed by the OAC. A two-week staff exercise replaced the CAS3. Originally scheduled to begin in October of 2001, Chief of Staff of the Army, General Dennis Reimer, postponed implementation of Phase IV because senior leaders were concerned that captains would lose valuable branch interaction normally gained at the CAS3.<sup>78</sup> The CAS3 would eventually merge with the CCC in 2004 though TRADOC still did not have an answer on how provide branch interaction without the CAS3.

From 2000 to 2010, the Army conducted several more studies that incrementally impacted the CCC. Formed in 2000, the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) recommended a shift in CCC curricula that provided combined arms training, common company command skills, and battalion to brigade level battle captain skills to all captains.<sup>79</sup> The 2003 Leader Development and Education Task Force effected no real change as many considered the redesign process more damaging to the CCC's design than helpful.<sup>80</sup> The next major study that brought concrete change to the CCC's curricula and design was the most recent one conducted in

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<sup>77</sup> Robert E. Kells, "TRADOC Organization in 1994," TRADOC Annual Command History 1994, last modified July 15, 1996, accessed November 26, 2014, <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/historian/pubs/org.htm>.

<sup>78</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 18-19. Jordan describes the four phases in more detail.

<sup>79</sup> Army Training and Leader Development Panel, "Officer Study Report to the Army" (Professional Military Education Study Report, US Army, 2002), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, OS-13.

<sup>80</sup> Jordan, "Yin and Yang," 21.

2010. The SALT used that study to frame the current and desired state for the CCC. With a deliberate design process, the SALT linked a US Army education strategy developed by TRADOC through the Army Learning Coordination Council (ALCC) to useful curricula for Centers of Excellence (CoEs). To better understand how the organization accomplished that linkage from strategy to curricula requires an examination of ALCC's development of the Army Learning Model (ALM) and officer General Learning Outcomes (GLOs).

### **Developing a TRADOC Education Strategy**

The 2010 CCC Study was part of a larger TRADOC effort to transform PME in response to an increasingly constrained fiscal environment. While understanding that budgetary cuts called for course requirement prioritization, TRADOC also viewed it as an opportunity to make PME a more competitive and adaptive learner-centric system and develop resource efficiencies by employing different learning methods.<sup>81</sup> To advance this educational transformation, TRADOC formally established the ALCC to oversee and coordinate the US Army's educational strategy implementation across all CoE's as embodied in TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-2, *The US Army Learning Concept (ALC) for 2015*.<sup>82</sup> Meeting for the first time in May 2011, the ALCC began developing an answer to the problem posed by *ALC 2015*. Namely, in a strategic environment characterized by persistent conflict, uncertainty, complexity, and adaptive adversaries, "[h]ow must the Army change its learning model from one that barely satisfies today's needs to one that promotes operational adaptability, engages learners, enables the Army to outpace adversaries, and

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<sup>81</sup> TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-2, *The US Army Learning Concept for 2015* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011, hereafter referenced as *ALC 2015*), 30. This TRADOC Pamphlet also outlines a clear set of actions to adapt PME in its appendix B.

<sup>82</sup> Keith R. Beurskens, "The Criticality of Captain's Education: Now and in the Future - An Update," *Military Review* XCII, no. 2 (April 2014): 53; and *ALC 2015*, 41-4. Appendix B of *ALC 2015* describes the 21st century Soldier competencies that must be instilled during IMT and reinforced across the span of a career at levels appropriate for each echelon.



meets the Army's learning requirements in 2015?"<sup>83</sup> *ALC 2015*'s basic intent was to create a learner centric environment that provides soldiers and leaders with the opportunity over the span of a career to master core soldier competencies. The resulting *ALC 2015* driven products to reach its intent, the ALM and GLOs, provided the SALT with the strategic context within which it deliberately designed CCC.<sup>84</sup>

The first three day *ALC 2015* implementation subject matter expert conference, in which the ALCC played a key role, began on May 23, 2011. The conference had one principle purpose, to identify and align learning outcomes through the entire officer-learning continuum from IMT to SSC with each of the 21st Century Soldier Competencies.<sup>85</sup> To "establish metrics for each of the nine competencies for each cohort and echelon and implement instructional strategies to inculcate 21st century soldier competencies," in PME, the ALCC formed five Soldier Competency Panels (SCPs).<sup>86</sup> Each SCP was organized around one to three of the competencies as ALM, identifies them.<sup>87</sup> These five panels also ensured "that schools and colleges make decisions about course and program content with a better understanding of the broader learning

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<sup>83</sup> *ALC 2015*, 16.

<sup>84</sup> Information Paper by Mr. William Bassett, "Introduction to the Army learning Coordination Council," January 21, 2015 (hereafter cited as ALCC Information Paper), 1-2. This document specifically references GLOs and ALM as products that aid in implementing *ALC 2015*'s intent.

<sup>85</sup> Memorandum by Army Learning Coordination Council Working Group, "Draft Learning Outcomes for the Officer Career Continuum of Learning," June 20, 2011 (hereafter cited as ALCC Draft Learning Outcomes), 1.

<sup>86</sup> *ALC 2015*, 35; and ALCC Draft Learning Outcomes, 1. The quote is from *ALC 2015*.

<sup>87</sup> Memorandum by Army Learning Coordination Council Working Group, "Fiscal Year 2012 Guidance for ALCC Competency Panels," February 6, 2012 (hereafter cited as ALCC FY 2012 Guidance), 1; and TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-2, *The US Army Learning Concept for 2015* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 41-4. The nine competencies are: Character and Accountability; Comprehensive Fitness; Adaptability and Initiative; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Teamwork and Collaboration; Cultural and JIIM Competence; Lifelong Learner (including digital literacy); Tactical and Technical Competence (full spectrum capable); and Communication and Engagement (written, oral, and negotiation).

context.”<sup>88</sup> At the beginning of the conference on May 23, 2011, the ALCC organized all of the participants into the five SCPs. Designated as the principle means through which the ALCC synthesized officer learning from IMT to SSC, the five SCPs worked asynchronously towards the three goals of the that first conference.<sup>89</sup>

None of the SCPs organized and worked identically. They did, however, generally follow a three-step methodology that the SCPs would use iteratively over the course of subsequent conferences. The first step addressed one of the key findings the 2010 CCC study helped bring to light, but applied to schools across the spectrum of officer education: high quality instructors are the most important factor to increasing learning. Unfortunately, the US Army has a habit in its educational institutions of attempting to give perfect curriculum to instructors who are not educators. This poses a problem when attempting to provide a common level of education to all officers. Because there was no standardized education background for instructors, learning facilitation varied greatly depending on the capabilities of individual instructors.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, to “[d]raft educationally sound learning outcomes that are understandable to non-educators,” the SCPs identified existing PME learning outcomes, army policies, and strategic guidance; identified educational gaps in what exists and write new learning outcomes to fill them; then reduce redundancies and group similar outcomes.<sup>91</sup>

The second step of the SCPs’ methodology, like the first, had subcomponents. They had to identify the most appropriate level of the ALM for each learning outcome the SCP identified

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<sup>88</sup> ALCC FY 2012 Guidance, 2.

<sup>89</sup> ALCC Draft learning Outcomes, 1.

<sup>90</sup> Mr. Keith Beurskens, SALT’s first Deputy Director and current lead for Army University, explained that handing curriculum to army officers that do not have an advanced degree or background in education and expecting them to successfully facilitate learning was a flawed method of educating students. Interview with author, December 18, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

<sup>91</sup> ALCC Draft Learning Outcomes, 1. All three steps of the SCPs’ methodology are found in this document.

and refined in step one. Then the SCPs vertically aligned those learning outcomes “to ensure each is introduced, reinforced, and emphasized at the right level” to best guarantee “progressive instruction and enable professional growth” throughout an officers career.<sup>92</sup> Lastly, the SCPs had to identify the most appropriate of the three learning domains – institutional, operational, or self-development – and recommend delivery through resident or distance learning for each learning outcome. The goal for the entirety of the second step was to refine the learning outcomes and their associated delivery methods by ensuring that they were nested at the primary, intermediate, and senior levels along the ALM.

The third step the SCPs undertook was to review the products of the first two steps for each 21st Century Soldier Competency and identify if any learning outcomes developed for any particular competency might influence any of the other nine competencies. In addition to creating linkages between competencies through the drafted learning outcomes, the SCPs would also have an opportunity to look for possible conflicts between competencies.

That first ALCC meeting resulted in the first draft of the GLOs and shaped how SALT concurrently designed CCC. Since then, the ALCC has met bi-annually and iteratively synchronize learning in PME and to maintain the integration and sequence of learning from IMT to SSC while fulfilling the intent of the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS) and the ALM.<sup>93</sup> A significant output of the ALCCs efforts is the recently approved and final GLOs. While the ALCC refined them numerous times over the past four years, SALT continually referred to each version as it concurrently redesigned CCC curricula across each CoE to help shape learning activities and outcomes as they applied to the institutional domain of learning.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> ALCC Draft Learning Outcomes, 1.

<sup>93</sup> School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, “The Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2015” (white paper, US Army Command and General Staff College, 2013, hereafter cited as SALT White Paper), 25.

<sup>94</sup> Army Learning Coordination Council, “General Learning Outcomes for Officers,” July 2014, in the author’s possession, 3. The document authors express that there “is no expectation

## Redesigning Captains' Education from the Ground Up

The 2010 CCC Study not only catalyzed TRADOC to formally establish the ALCC to oversee and coordinate the ALM implementation plan across all CoEs, it also spurred it to create the SALT.<sup>95</sup> Because of discrepancies among the CCCs' Common Core curricula, TRADOC established the SALT in 2010.<sup>96</sup> For the first time, the US Army consolidated captains' PME under one headquarters.

To implement the ALM with the MLC 2015, the SALT followed the course design, development, validation, and implementation model prescribed in TRADOC Regulation 350-70, *Army Learning Policy and Systems*. Using this model, the SALT designed and developed each component of CCC, then validated through a pilot process focused on five key areas: design, delivery method, learning content, learning time required, and facilitator support required. The SALT conducted piloting incrementally. First, it conducted a proof-of-principle that demonstrated the concept's feasibility. Then the SALT conducted pilots to demonstrate curricula feasibility within the actual learning environment. After validating each concept, the SALT conducted full course pilots to validate the CCC as a whole and ensure that it achieved educational goals.<sup>97</sup>

With all CCCs organized under its authority, the SALT was able to enact significant changes to the design of captains' PME – more so than recommendation implementation following previous studies. While many previous captains' PME studies and boards found that captains were receiving too much training and not enough education, with the possible exception

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that any single course address every GLO at its level of the Officer Career Continuum. Proponents and individuals should use GLOs to help shape learning activities and outcomes across all three domains: institutional, operational, and self development.”

<sup>95</sup> Beurskens, “Update,” 53; and ALCC Information Paper, 1.

<sup>96</sup> Army Regulation 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 53.

<sup>97</sup> SALT White Paper (2013), 28. The white paper describes the SALT's use of TRADOC Regulation 350-70.

of the PDOS, none significantly shifted captains' PME towards education.<sup>98</sup> The SALT's ongoing efforts to design CCC to implement the 2010 CCC recommendations as it works with the ALCC and CoEs, have done more to shift the focus of captains' PME towards educating captains for complexity than any previous attempts.

#### 2010 US Army CCC Study: Framing the Environment and the Problem

In February 2010, the US Army CAC Commander, Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, commissioned a team to study CCCs across the US Army. Focusing on curriculum, facilities, governance, staff and faculty, and students at each of the fifteen CCCs, the team made forty-seven findings and seventy-one recommendations.<sup>99</sup> The original SALT staff was drawn from that 2010 study making them uniquely qualified to use the study in framing the environment. Led by Colonel William Raymond, the 2010 CCC Study Team Lead and eventual first Director of SALT, the SALT used five key findings to frame the educational environment and the problems that separated the current and desired state for captains' education. Unsurprisingly, these findings echoed some of the issues previous studies identified.

First, similar to PDOS, the 2010 study team found that captains' education depended on high quality Small Group Leaders (SGLs).<sup>100</sup> Unfortunately, the study found that only five of the fifteen CCCs used a rigorous SGL selection process. Most of the schools simply relied on Human Resources Command (HRC) or the installation personnel manager to provide captains as SGLs

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<sup>98</sup> One can argue that, because PDOS led to the implementation of the CAS3, the study did lead to a significant change in how captains were educated.

<sup>99</sup> Beurskens, Carmichael, and Raymond, "Criticality of Captains' Education," 53; and Beurskens, "Update," 52.

<sup>100</sup> Special Commission from the US Army Combined Arms Center, "Report of Findings and Recommendations 2010 US Army Captains' Career Course Study" (Professional Military Education study report, US Army, 2010, hereafter cited as 2010 CCC Study), accessed July 2, 2014, CARL Digital Library, A-4.

without any identifiable selection process.<sup>101</sup> Second, as with the Haines Board and RETO Study, they found that the curriculum must be “current, relevant, and rigorous.”<sup>102</sup> While the study team recognized that CCCs, for the most part, did a good job teaching branch specific tactical and technical skills, each had issues in updating courseware to reflect current doctrine. Simultaneous lessons plan development and doctrine updates, perceived rigidity of the Common Core curriculum, rapid personnel turnover, and poor understanding of mechanisms for obtaining updates contributed to failures in maintain currency and relevance in courseware. Third, like the Dailey Board, which argued for more centralization to maximize standardization and reduce duplication, the study found that the Common Core portion of CCC was not so common.<sup>103</sup> The study recognized a need to increase governance over CCCs to standardize the Common Core curriculum.<sup>104</sup> Fourth, to better enable small group instruction as endorsed by the PDOS, the 2010 study found that most CCC classrooms needed updates in form and function to facilitate collaborative learning.<sup>105</sup> Most classroom facilities remained set up in a linear fashion meant for a lecture method of instruction rather than in a way that enabled students to interact and learn through dialogue and discussion.<sup>106</sup> Lastly, reminiscent of Major General Norris’s view in 1970 that officers attending advanced schooling should have a fulfilling and “happy” year, the study found that an overwhelming majority of students advocated for the CCC remaining a resident course requiring a permanent change of station.<sup>107</sup> This was because students felt they had a better

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<sup>101</sup> 2010 CCC Study, 53.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., A-2 – A-3; and Beurskens, “Update,” 52.

<sup>103</sup> 2010 CCC Study, A-7.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., A-3 – A-4, and A-6 – A-7; and Beurskens, “Update,” 53.

<sup>105</sup> 2010 CCC Study, A-2 – A-3; and Beurskens, “Update,” 53.

<sup>106</sup> 2010 CCC Study, 41.

<sup>107</sup> Norris Review, 5-4; 2010 CCC Study, A-6. Students also overwhelmingly disliked the idea of a CCC modeled on distance learning; and Beurskens, “Update,” 53.

opportunity to learn from the diverse experiences of leaders and peers, network, and take the time to reset before company command.<sup>108</sup>

The findings framed an educational environment that failed to fully provide captains across all branches and specialties an education that met the Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development*, defined purpose for the course. AR 350-1 provides the desired state of CCCs in paragraph 3-32 in the following manner.

The Captains Career Course (CCC) provides captains with the tactical, technical and leader knowledge and skills needed to lead company-size units and serve on battalion and brigade staffs. The course emphasizes the development of leader competencies while integrating recent operational experiences of the students with quality institutional training. It facilitates life-long learning through an emphasis on self-development. The curriculum includes common core subjects, branch-specific tactical and technical instruction, and branch-immaterial staff officer training.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, developing leaders who are tactically and technically competent, able to serve on battalion and brigade staffs, and able to lead companies make up the three conditions a CCC must meet in educating captains.

The 2010 CCC Study provided the SALT not only with the current and desired states of CCC, but with the problem frame as well. Disparity across CCCs concerning SGL competence, facilities, curricula commonality, relevance, and currency were all problem sets preventing CoEs from developing leaders to the standard outlined in AR 350-1. Of these problem sets, SGL competence, stood out as the key problem in providing captains a high quality education. As Colonel Raymond noted, there “is no substitute for a quality instructor. All the classroom technology, doctrinal manuals and theories are nearly worthless without a passionate and

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<sup>108</sup> Beurskens, “Update,” 53.

<sup>109</sup> Army Regulation 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 70; and 2010 CCC Study, 21. The 2010 CCC study used this paragraph of AR 350-1 as the litmus against which they could analyze CCCs.

experienced officer to develop our captains.”<sup>110</sup> Mr. Keith Beurskens, former SALT Deputy Director, framed the issue another way. “You can give a good instructor a terrible lesson plan, in the middle of a 120 degrees desert, and learning will still occur.”<sup>111</sup> This meant that the SALT not only had to design CCC curricula that were adaptable enough to stay current and relevant while providing a high level of education to captains, they more importantly had to find a way to standardize SGL competency across all of the CoEs.

#### Practical Employment of TRADOC Regulation 350-70

The operational approach the SALT employed to solve the problems identified in the 2010 CCC Study can best be described as “Design, Test, Assess, and Improve”. The SALT utilized an iterative approach to link captains’ education with the ALM. It began by collaborating with CoEs and the ALCC to design the initial and subsequent versions of the MLC 2015. The SALT then tested curricula incrementally followed by student and faculty assessment of changes to captains’ PME. Finally, it improved identified weaknesses. The approach worked to continually update and refine the PME design, curricula, and the sharing of practices across CoEs.

#### Collaborating to Design

The SALT used several formal and informal processes to collaborate. At the highest level where collaboration is, in essence, gaining clearer strategic guidance, it worked with TRADOC through the CAC Commanders/Directors of Training conference and the ALCC. The SALT also collaborated with each of the CoEs to develop the initial MLC 2015 and the associated curricula.

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<sup>110</sup> Myles Caggins III, “A New Model for Captains' Instruction: Small-Group Leaders Bring Experience to Captains' Classroom,” September 1, 2011, accessed January 12, 2015, <http://www.army.mil/article/64822>.

<sup>111</sup> Mr. Keith Beurskens gave this example as he explained why he saw instructors as the key to raising the effectiveness of PME. Interview with author, December 18, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.



While the Commanders/Directors of Training conference and ALCC conferences provided a ready venue for collaboration, before SALT could work with the CoEs, it had to break communication and perception barriers.

TRADOC conducts the Commanders/Directors of Training conference semi-annually to provide the Commanding General, the CAC and CoE commanders with a forum to discuss training issues and expand on topics related to ALM implementation. The CAC conducts the Commanders/Directors of Training conference in conjunction with the ALCC Principals Meeting, which, like the Commanders/Directors of Training conference, facilitates chain of command opportunities for providing guidance and resolving issues beyond the authority of schools and centers.<sup>112</sup> At a more practical level, the ALCC provides the SALT with three other forums to collaborate: the ALCC working group, SCPs, and Implementation Panels (IPs).<sup>113</sup>

The ALCC Working Group occurs semi-annually about two months prior to the ALCC Principals Meeting. This council of Colonels-level management forum involves all five of the ALCC's SCPs and IPs. The SALT acted as a CGSC representative to collaborate with multiple schools, centers, and directorates to address items of interest. In addition to representatives from TRADOC Headquarters, CAC Headquarters, and the CoEs, the SALT also has the opportunity to enter into dialogue and discussion with TRADOC external participants to the working group like the US Military Academy.<sup>114</sup> This working group and the as needed SCP and IP meetings afforded the SALT with ample opportunities to receive guidance and feedback on MLC 2015

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<sup>112</sup> *ALC 2015*, 35-41. Appendix B provides the lead and supporting agencies intended to support *ALC 2015* implementation.

<sup>113</sup> Notably, SALT did not have higher levels of collaboration available to them until after it drafted its initial MLC 2015 concept. The initial concept was drafted in January of 2011. The ALCC's first meeting was not until May 23, 2011. Once TRADOC formally established the ALCC, SALT took advantage of the additional opportunities to collaborate at the forums mentioned in this and the following paragraph.

<sup>114</sup> *ALC 2015*, 35-41. Appendix B does not specifically include SALT as a lead or supporting agency. However the White Paper explains SALT's role in implementation as it attended various conferences.

development. However, the organization did not limit its collaboration to ALCC facilitated discussion and dialogue.

Nested with TRADOC's established governance structure, the Director of the SALT chairs semi-annual In Progress Reviews (IPRs) and monthly MLC conferences to afford the mid-grade officer education stakeholders across the CoEs the ability to assess course effectiveness, raise issues impacting execution, share best practices, and address any curriculum requirements that fall outside of the normal annual curriculum update cycle. To enable best practice sharing, one of the CoEs normally co-hosts these IPRs with the SALT Director.<sup>115</sup> While this system worked to enable sharing and collaboration as the SALT designed the MLC, it did not prove effective immediately. The organization needed buy-in from CoEs before dialogue became useful.

CoEs initially resisted the SALT's efforts to provide commonality to programs across all branches' captains' education, viewing them as negative feedback on performance. While it seemed simple enough for TRADOC to place all CoEs' curricula from initial entry through CCC under one organization's control, the SALT had to influence organizational perception change away from an old TRADOC model of educational governance to break communication barriers between itself and CoEs. Instead of telling CoEs what to do and creating a product for CCCs without any concern for its quality or impact on branch specific education, the SALT became a products and services organization that strove to meet each CoE's requirements. Understanding that CoEs are geographically separated and often do not have the time or inclination to share best practices with each other, the SALT transformed into a service providing organization by

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<sup>115</sup> SALT White Paper (2013), 25. This portion of the white paper explains SALT's responsibilities regarding the ALCC.

establishing responsive liaisons for each CoE and updating the Common Core on at least an annual basis.”<sup>116</sup>

The liaisons the SALT established serve as a direct link for each CoE and school, acting as the primary avenue for it to coordinate execution and ongoing assessment of the Common Core. Through, at minimum, weekly contact and a semi-annual school visit or a Directorate of Training (DOT) level Video Teleconference, the liaisons gather CoE and school perspectives on curricula developments. They then bring CoE and school issues and ideas to a monthly MLC teleconference for review and action as necessary. When CoEs or schools consistently bring up an issue with any of the curricula for captains’ PME, the SALT focuses on the issue and makes changes where and when necessary based on the type of issue it is.<sup>117</sup>

After successfully breaking down the communication barriers between CoEs and between itself and the CoEs, the SALT used the 2010 CCC Study’s findings and recommendations in conjunction with CoE feedback from the CoEs to rapidly develop the initial concept in 2010 for the MLC 2015. The review specifications for each CoE included a detailed analysis of courses, or course content to include lessons, modules, or phases, into five categories. The first was course content that CoEs felt had to be taught at resident schools. Second was content that could be taught by a Mobile Training Team and/or by US Army Reserve Total Army School System (TASS) Battalions. Third was content that could be fully or partially converted to DL. Fourth was content that could be taught in the operational force. Lastly, CoEs had to determine which content

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<sup>116</sup> Mr. James Beck, current Deputy Director of SALT and a member of the 2010 CCC Study Team, and Mr. Keith Beurskens commented on the specific measures SALT took to get buy in from CoEs. The CoEs viewed the formation of SALT as negative feedback on the quality of the education they provided captains. They also stressed that a key to gaining buy in was by establishing liaisons that provided a service to CoEs. Interviews with author, December 17-18, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

<sup>117</sup> Brief created by the School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, “MLC 2015 Brief,” March 5, 2014, accessed October 22, 2014, <http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/lde/cgsc/salt>. The SALT overview briefing outlines the duties and responsibilities of CoE and School liaisons.

could be eliminated, reduced, or consolidated.<sup>118</sup> As the CoEs developed their recommendations, the SALT reviewed those concerning the CCC and the Common Core to ensure they nested with the emerging *ALC 2015* and “pulled them together.”<sup>119</sup>

Based on the findings and recommendations from the 2010 CCC study and CoE feedback, the SALT designed the initial and current concepts for CCC on an experiential learning model similar to that used for majors attending CGSS.<sup>120</sup> The initial MLC 2015 concept in 2010 was described in terms of captains moving through milestones along a progressive educational track that encompassed self-learning, institutional education facilitated by high quality SGLs and requiring a permanent change of station, and training at their units.

According to the original MLC 2015 concept (see Figure 1), once promoted to first lieutenant, all officers will take an Army Learning Assessment (ALA) to establish a baseline for his or her learning needs. If the ALA indicated an officer had significant gaps in foundational knowledge that needed to be addressed prior to attendance at the resident phase of the CCC, they will have to complete a preparation course. The common core phase will be completed at home station prior the resident phase in a small-group, peer to peer facilitated seminar in an on post regional learning center. Lacking such a center at their duty station, the officer will attend a nearby learning center in a temporary duty and return status prior to changing stations. The officer will not permanently change station to the resident course, but instead will be assigned to

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<sup>118</sup> ALC 2015, 35-41. Most of the information in this paragraph was drawn from the description of initiatives and associated tasks as applied to CoEs in Appendix B.

<sup>119</sup> Mr. James Beck explained that the CoEs developed the Common Core curriculum for him while he reviewed and consolidated the results of their efforts and ensured they aligned with ALM. Interview with author, December 17, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

<sup>120</sup> Mr. James Beck also noted that SALT used an experiential learning model similar to the one in use at CGSS as a starting point in drafting the initial MLC 2015. Interview with author, December 17, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

their next duty station and attend their branch phase of the CCC on the way.<sup>121</sup>

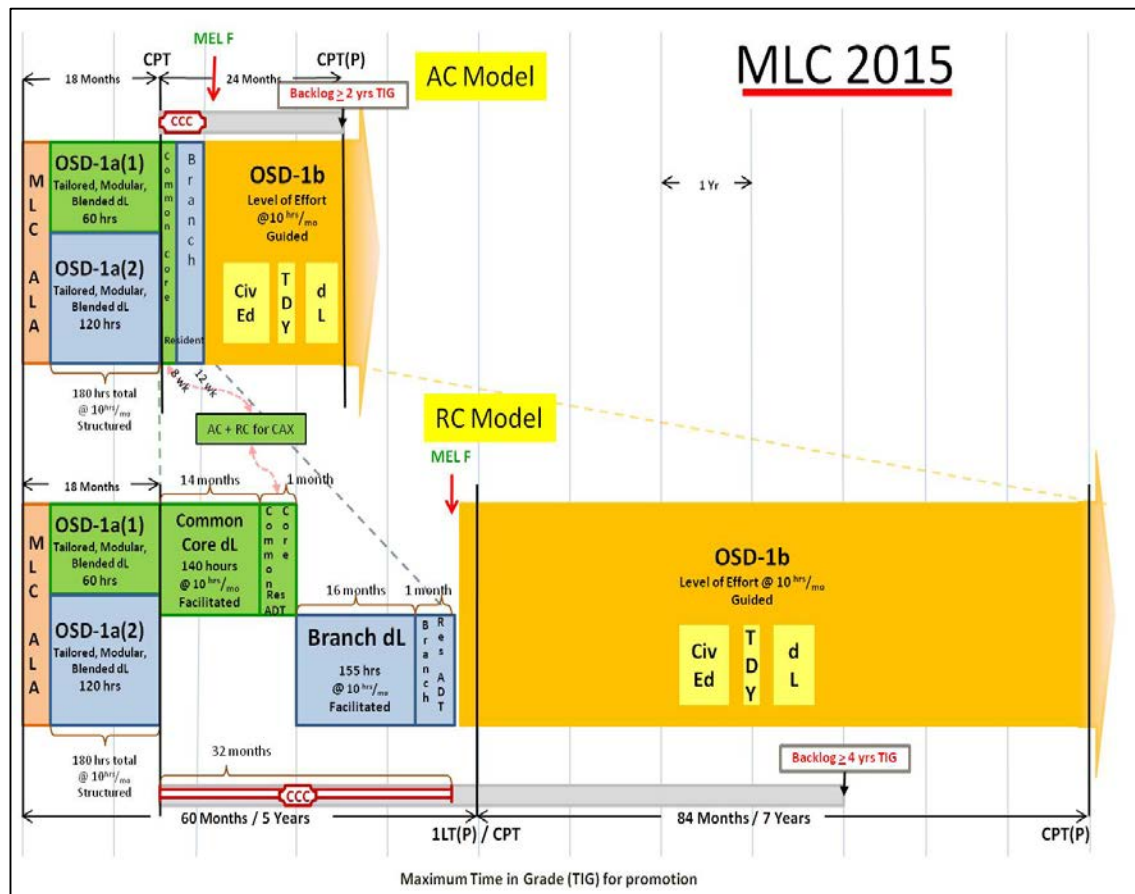


Figure 1: Initial MLC 2015 Concept

Source: SALT, *The Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2015*, White Paper, Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, 2011, 7.

Designed as a multi-branch and multi-component small group seminar facilitated by peer-to-peer learning, the original MLC 2015 Common Core focused on mission command, planning, training, Full Spectrum Operations (FSO), critical thinking, Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) operations, and enabling leadership competencies. This version of the course attempted to create a blended learning environment that used Distance Learning (DL) and resident classroom facilitated instruction to achieve consistent level of

<sup>121</sup> Beurskens, Carmichael, and Raymond, "Criticality of Captains' Education," 55; and Beurskens, "Update," 53-4.

learning for captains across all branches. Originally, Common Core consisted of 8 weeks resident for Active Component officers or 140 hours DL and two weeks resident for Reserve Component officers (See Figure 2). The TLOs were identical for both components and were supposed to achieve the same learning outcome for all components. It included an Initial Assessment Exercise (IAE) and learner-centered instruction in mission command, planning, training, FSO critical thinking, and JIIM that built towards a series of FSO centric exercises focused on transitions using virtual technology. Common Core ended with a Combined Arms Exercise reliant on digital technology in a weeklong, high-paced exercise intended to reflect a current operating environment.<sup>122</sup>

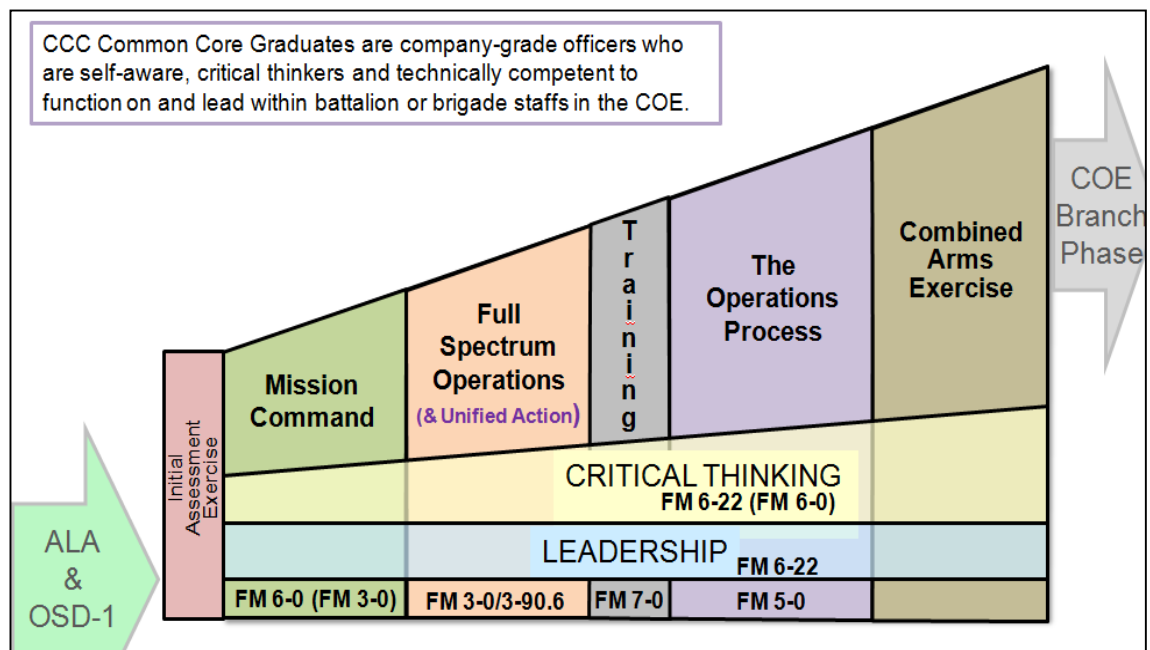


Figure 2. Initial MLC 2015 Common Core model.

Source: SALT, *The Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2015*, White Paper, Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, 2011, 10.

In drafting the initial MLC 2015, the SALT also made its first attempt to standardize SGL selection and training across all CoEs to address the key problem of consistent instructor quality.

<sup>122</sup> SALT White Paper (2011), 10.

Beyond normalizing a formal selection process, with rigorous selection criteria and senior leader involvement to select quality SGLs and distance learning facilitators with the right experience and rank, the SALT also proposed an SGL faculty development system that replaced the existing Army Basic Instructor and Small Group Instructor Training Courses. The SALT viewed a comprehensive faculty development program (FDP), similar to CGSC's, that certified instructors in their lesson subject matter expertise, included recurring faculty development activities, and presented CGSC versions of the adult learning principles and an experiential learning model as better preparation for SGLs in CCC than both of the existing courses. The SALT envisioned CoEs developing resident capability to provide this faculty development once it established the CCC standard for FDP. This FDP standard eliminated SGL requirements to attend the Army Basic Instructor and Small Group Instructor Training Courses.<sup>123</sup>

#### Incremental Testing and Revision

In September of 2011, with the initial MLC 2015 drafted and a program to develop faculty in place, the SALT moved on to its first iteration of testing at Fort Bliss, Texas. A precursor to the pilot classes held in 2012 and 2013, the proof-of-principle testing focused on the Common Core portion of CCC and involved thirty-two students from across sixteen branches and nine FDP certified instructors.<sup>124</sup> The students attended the course on Temporary Duty status, freeing them from their parent units to focus on the course. Breaking from the standard eight-hour course day, the Common Core proof-of principle reduced in class time to six hours and reserved two hours from for students to reflect, read, and write. The SALT divided the students into two

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<sup>123</sup> SALT White paper (2011), 16.

<sup>124</sup> Melissa Bower, "SALT Prepares Proof-of-Principle Course for Junior Officers" July 21, 2011, accessed January 12, 2015, <http://www.army.mil/article/62029>; and Caggins, "A New Model."

sixteen officer small groups and maintained a student to teacher ratio of eight to one.<sup>125</sup> Upon completion of the proof-of principle, the students moved on their respective branch CCC, but were excused from the Common Core learning phase.

The nine instructors selected for the 2011 proof-of-principle at Fort Bliss consisted of majors and senior captains. These SGLS averaged three combat deployments and possessing a collective 128 years of military service that included twenty four years of command and key developmental assignment experience. Additionally, the CoEs chose the SGLs based on exceptional performance in leadership positions, combat experience, and communication skills.<sup>126</sup> Upon selection, the SGLs underwent three certification phases prior to the beginning of the course. First, they underwent branch led and TRADOC aligned adult learning facilitation training. Then they received a two-week certification course on the new curriculum at Fort Leavenworth. Finally, the SGLs and the SALT refined their lesson plans at Fort Bliss in the week leading up to the proof-of-principle.

The SALT predicated the substance and conduct of this first proof-of-principle at Fort Bliss on the assumption captains would better resonate with a doctrine based curriculum using an educational based learning model instead of a training based learning model that relied on tactics, techniques, and procedures from the ongoing operations in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Captains overwhelmingly felt negatively towards the efficacy of the Common Core prior to this and subsequent pilot programs. The student feedback the SALT received regarding the new Common Core Curriculum after it revised the it, except for the block of instruction containing mandatory AR 350-1 training, received an 80 percent or higher positive response rate from students. Students even responded positively to parts of the curriculum they struggled with. For example, students noted that they did not use or

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<sup>125</sup> Caggins, “A New Model.”

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. SGL selection criteria inferred from a comment made by Col. Robert Doerer, Director, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, US Army Human Resources Command, in the article.



have much exposure to Troop Leading Procedures (TLPs) after attendance at the Officer Basic Course. This lack of exposure made transitioning to the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) conceptually difficult and students desired more time focused on MDMP during the course. In response to this student feedback, the SALT ameliorated the Common Core curriculum to include a refresher on TLPs prior to the MDMP block of instruction and added more iterations of the MDMP.<sup>127</sup>

Throughout course testing from 2011 through 2013, the SALT utilized a Post Instructional Conference and Course Design Review process in line with CGSC, to update CCC Curricula on at least an annual basis. An annual review marked a significant change from the old review process. CoEs used to review and update their curricula once every three to four years, without regard to changes to doctrine that occurred after curricula updates. If the Army published new doctrine or guidance after a CoE had completed a curriculum review and update, the CoE would not change its curriculum until after its next review and update in three or four years.<sup>128</sup> The SALT began to deliberately review and update curricula at least once a year in response to pilot student and instructor feedback. To further enhance updating procedures, it also divided changes into three priority categories to help CoEs implement required updates to the Common Core in a timely manner.

Category One updates involve changes that CoE's must implement within 30 days if required. For example, if the US Army publishes a new Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) or new training guidance from TRADOC that requires a change in the common core, SALT will push the change out through SharePoint to all CoEs to implement within 30 days. Most recently, TRADOC tasked the SALT to incorporate the Decisive Action Training

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<sup>127</sup> Mr. Keith Beurskens provided insight to both the assumption and results of piloting as contained in this paragraph. Interview with author, December 18, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

<sup>128</sup> Mr. James Beck described SALT's use of Post Instructional Conference and Course Design Review Process and the three update category updates. Interview with author, December 17, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Environment scenario into blocks overall. It was able to do this almost instantaneously as a Category One change by publishing an information paper to all CoEs on SharePoint. In essence, Category One updates are necessary updates that do not follow the annual update cycle.<sup>129</sup>

Category Two updates are those that must be done annually. These changes are common issues with the course found and confirmed through surveys, key leader interviews, and focus group feedback. An example is feedback from the branch schools as a group that one of the ten rubrics used to formally assess students in the common core. One recent example concerned the Mission Command Analysis written requirement, a six to eight page paper that asks students to comment on four principles of Mission Command. Feedback from across the branches was that the rubric for the requirement was written unclearly, making it harder for instructors to assess students according to standards set forth by the SALT. The SALT responded by changing the rubric's wording to clarify the intent and educational learning outcome for the paper during its annual update.<sup>130</sup>

Category Three updates are those that should be done annually if CoEs have the time. Concerning updates the SALT makes if it has time, these updates generally include refinements to existing lesson plans that make them better.<sup>131</sup> For example, a CoE may have a great lesson plan that works well with the faculty and students, but it was developed three years ago and

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<sup>129</sup> Mr. James Beck described this particular example of a recent Category One update. Interview with author, December 17, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

<sup>130</sup> SALT White Paper (2013), 13. The white paper describes ten rubrics for assessment. The formal assessment tools in the Common Core consist of four written requirements, four formal briefing requirements, a 24-hour virtual, multi-branch STAFFEX, and a four-hour final examination.

<sup>131</sup> Mr. James Beck describes Category updates as the “things we do if we have time.” Category three updates tend to be minor adjustments in the curricula. Interview with author, December 17, 2014, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

includes a concrete experience out of date with current operations. Updating the concrete experience to reflect current operations would be a Category Three update.<sup>132</sup>

After several pilot tests and lessons learned in 2011 and 2012 and the development of the GLOs, the CCC design changed significantly and grew to encompass officers from first lieutenant through promotable captain and warrant officers from the rank of warrant officer two through promotable chief warrant officer three.<sup>133</sup> The MLC now includes six phases: the ALA, Officer Self Development Program Level 1, the MLC Common Core (MLC-CC), the CCC, Company Commander First Sergeant Course, and Officer Self Development Program Level 2 (See Figure 3).<sup>134</sup>

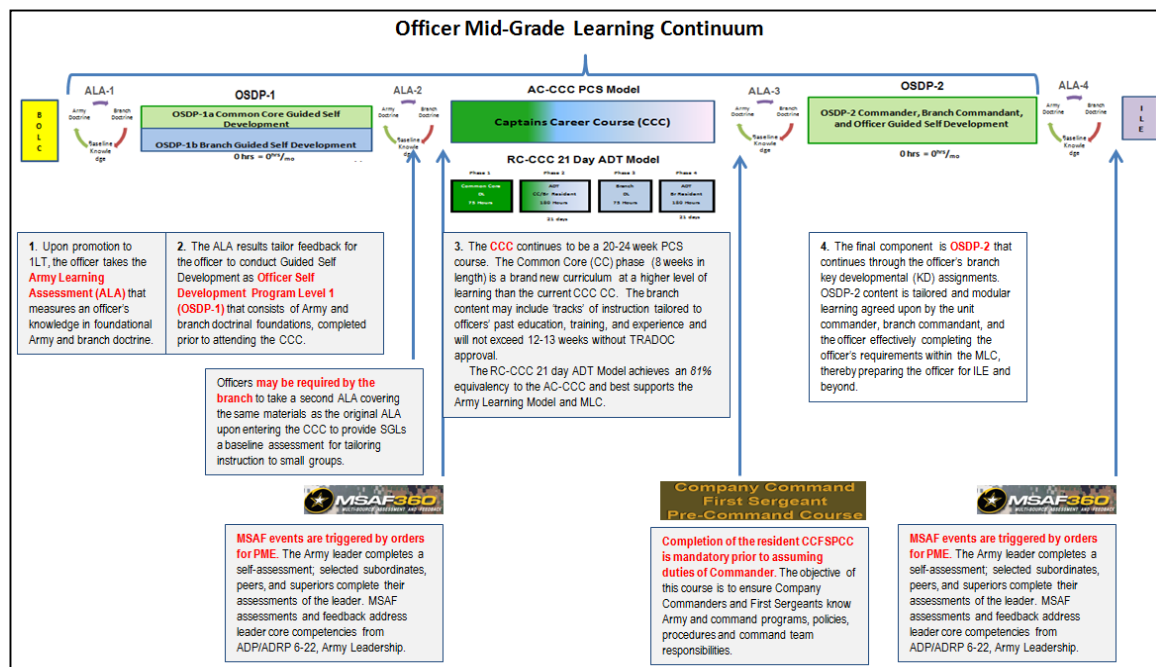


Figure 3. Current MLC 2015.

Source: SALT, *The Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2015*, White Paper, Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, 2013, 10.

<sup>132</sup> A concrete experience in terms of an experiential learning model is an example or vignette used to introduce a lesson.

<sup>133</sup> SALT White Paper (2013), 9.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 9-14.

In contrast to the original Common Core Curriculum, the current curriculum creates a blended learning environment that uses DL and resident classroom facilitated instruction. It also accounts for doctrinal updates as reflected in current US Army capstone doctrine (see Figure 4). Including an IAE and learner-centered instruction on leadership, mission command, cross-cultural skills, Unified Land Operations, unit training management, operations, and critical thinking, the curriculum covers the full spectrum of operations and focuses on transitions using immersive technology. A weeklong capstone staff exercise (STAFFEX) then leverages the latest mission command systems and technology to reflect the most current operating environment.<sup>135</sup>

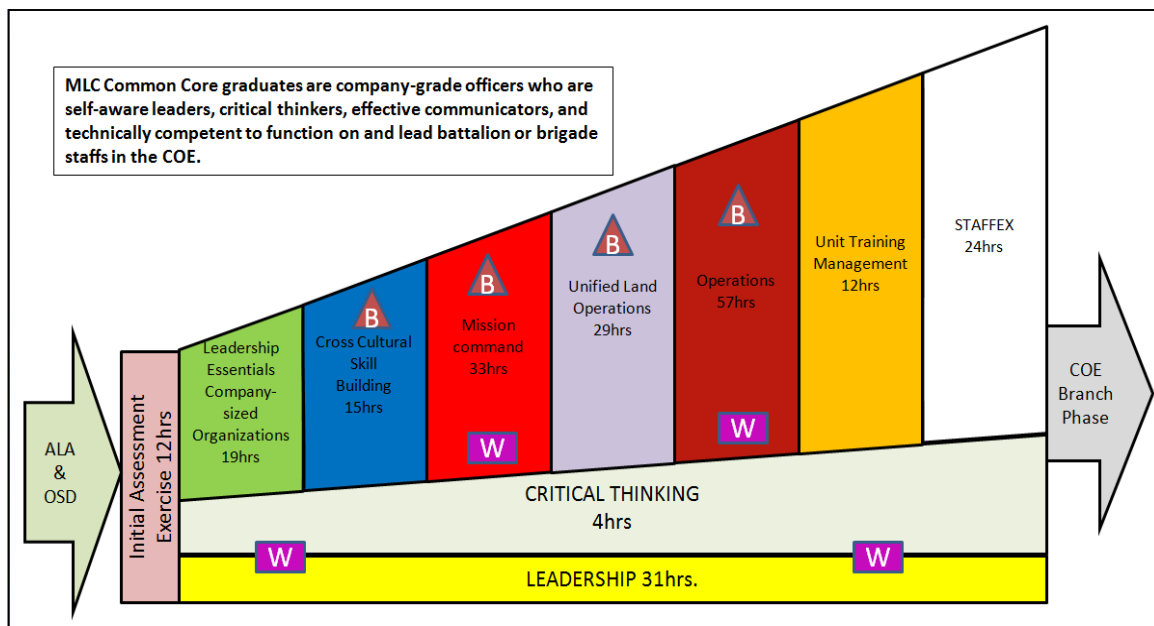


Figure 4. Current Common Core Model.

Source: SALT, *The Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2015*, White Paper, Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, 2013, 13.

Since 2005, the Center for Army Leadership has published the results of the Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) to assess and track trends in Army leader attitudes about leader development, the quality of leadership, and the contribution of leadership to mission

<sup>135</sup> SALT White Paper (2013), 12-13.

accomplishment. An approved and authorized US Army survey, approximately 20,000 uniformed (Active and Reserve) respondents and 3,000 civilian respondents typically complete the CASAL.<sup>136</sup> The results of the past two surveys regarding recent CCC graduate perceptions on education illustrate increased satisfaction with the course as the SALT introduced piloting into each CoE (See Figures 5 and 6). Ultimately, it shows that the SALT has thus far successfully designed, tested, assessed, and improved CCC curricula.

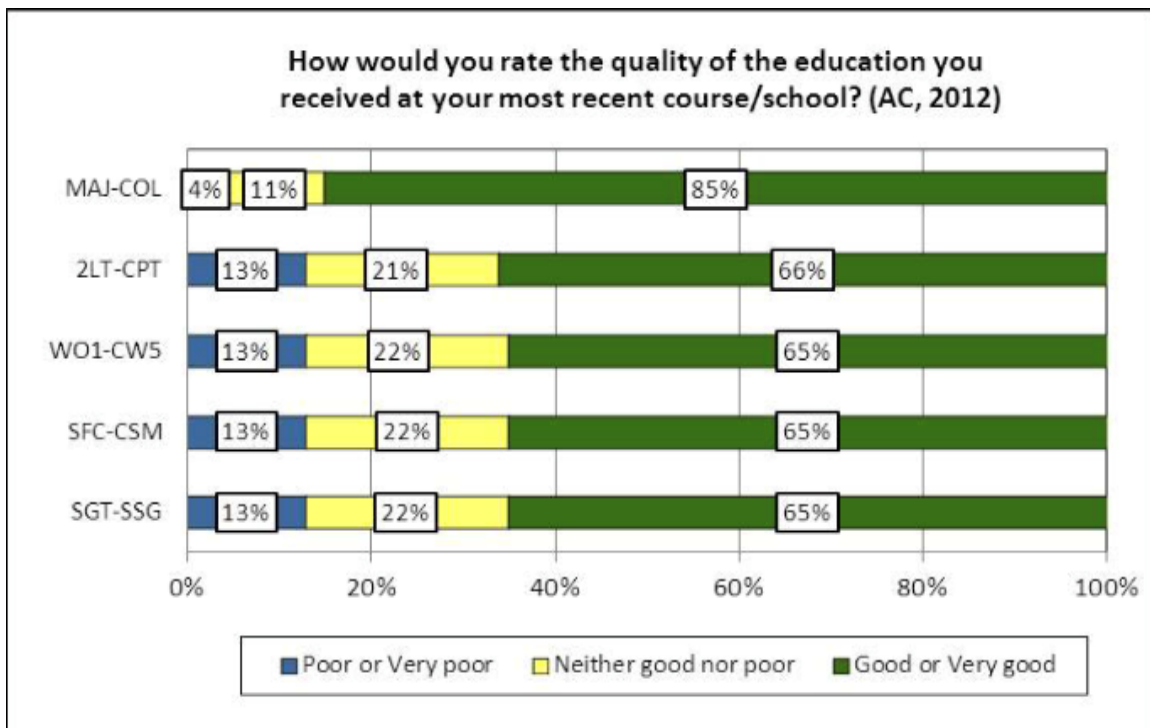


Figure 5. 2012 CASAL perceptions of recent graduates about the quality of PME.

Source: Center for Army Leadership, *2012 CASAL Main Findings*, Fort Leavenworth: Combined Arms Center, 2013, 89.

<sup>136</sup> Center for Army Leadership, "Center for Army Leadership Army Leader Development Survey Site," last modified September 13, 2012, accessed December 19, 2014, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/CAL/CALSurvey/index.asp>. Information is from the CASAL homepage welcome statement.

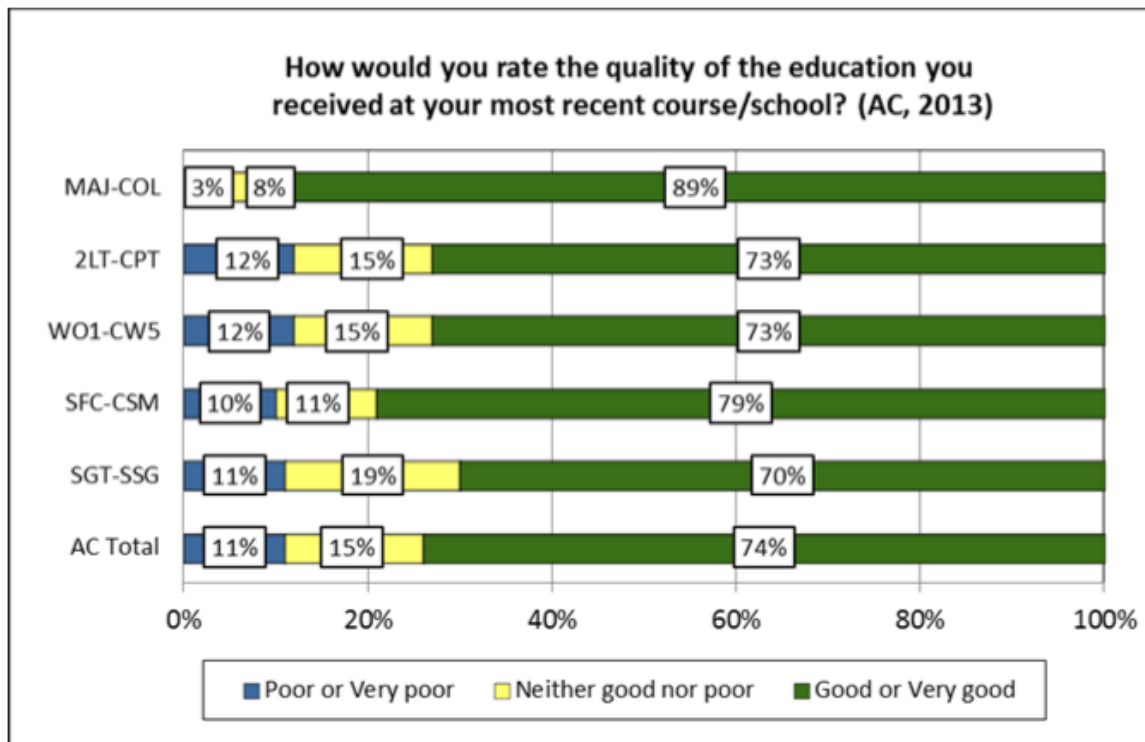


Figure 6. 2013 CASAL perceptions of recent graduates about the quality of PME.

Source: Center for Army Leadership, *2013 CASAL Main Findings*, Fort Leavenworth: Combined Arms Center, 2014, 98.

### Conclusion

The US Army has continually studied and evolved its PME system, ever searching for the right balance between education and training. The latest changes have brought forth an unprecedented opportunity in the US Army's history to mold the education it provides officers during their formative years. The US Army is taking advantage of this opportunity. This has already resulted in some of significant concepts and developments, like the formation of the SALT, the MLC 2015, and GLOs for officers. The US Army – the SALT in particular – has moved PME forward by using a deliberate design methodology to build on past lessons learned and create CCC curricula that prepares captains to operate in complex environments.

The SALT succeeded in creating a common core that is more adaptable and able to change to meet the most up to date doctrine, and it did so using a deliberate design process that

reflects the key design activities as outlined in the ADM. The SALT engaged in critical and creative thinking to mitigate bureaucratically created stovepipes within TRADOC between the CoE's and itself, successfully synchronize CCCs across the US Army, and share lessons learned quickly and effectively. It collaborated and dialogued through formal and informal meetings and interactions with key stakeholders and those within the US Army education community. The SALT used the 2010 CCC Study to frame both the environment and the problem. Lastly, the SALT MLC 2015 White Paper is an example of the type of narrative it used coupled with visual modeling (See figures 1 – 4) to enhance understanding of why and how the SALT used its operational approach to redesign captains' education the way it did. Clearly, the SALT deliberately designed captains' education for the better.

Still, as with most things, there is room for SALT to improve captains' PME. The 2014 CASAL report should show an increase in student satisfaction with CCC if the past two surveys serve as indicators for a trend. However, the efficacy of curricula cannot be based on student perceptions alone. The SALT needs a way to receive feedback from the operational force on whether or not the current CCC model provides the right education to our captains, at the right time, and in the right learning environment. This aspect of CCC Curricula merits further study and research.

The SALT has put forth a tremendous effort to shift captains' PME significantly more towards education as it simultaneously seeks to raise the quality of their education and prepare them to meet the uncertain demands of complex operational environments. These efforts have not resulted in a perfect curriculum. Indeed, it lacks a way to tie into the operational force to garner feedback on the actual level of learning CCC graduates attain. However, because it has established a system that allows CCC to adapt as updates to doctrine and the operational environment occur, once SALT creates the means to gather operational force feedback it will undoubtedly prove more than capable of continuing to improve education for the US Army's captains.

Appendix A: Consent and Use Agreement for Oral History Materials

You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in this oral history interview, and once you begin you may cease participating at any time without penalty. The anticipated risk to you in participating is negligible and no direct personal benefit has been offered for your participation. If you have questions about this research study, please contact the student at: \_\_\_\_\_ or Dr. Robert F. Baumann, Director of Graduate Degree Programs, at (913) 684-2742.

To: Director, Graduate Degree Programs  
Room 3517, Lewis & Clark Center  
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College

1. I, \_\_\_\_\_, participated in an oral history interview conducted by \_\_\_\_\_, a graduate student in the Master of Military Art and Science Degree Program, on the following date [s]: \_\_\_\_\_ concerning the following topic: \_\_\_\_\_.

2. I understand that the recording [s] and any transcript resulting from this oral history will belong to the U.S. Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the Command and General Staff College or the U.S. Army, in accordance with guidelines posted by the Director, Graduate Degree Programs and the Center for Military History. I also understand that subject to security classification restrictions I will be provided with a copy of the recording for my professional records. In addition, prior to the publication of any complete edited transcript of this oral history, I will be afforded an opportunity to verify its accuracy.

3. I hereby expressly and voluntarily relinquish all rights and interests in the recording [s] with the following caveat:

\_\_\_\_\_ None    \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my participation in this oral history interview is voluntary and I may stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty. I understand that the tapes and transcripts resulting from this oral history may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and therefore, may be releasable to the public contrary to my wishes. I further understand that, within the limits of the law, the U.S. Army will attempt to honor the restrictions I have requested to be placed on these materials.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Interviewee                      Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Accepted on Behalf of the Army by                      Date



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